



Rhode Island Executive Office of Health and Human Services
3 West Road, Virks Building, Cranston, RI 02920

February 2, 2018

The Honorable Representative Patricia A. Serpa, Chairwoman
House Committee on Oversight
101 State House
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Chairwoman Serpa:

Thank you for the ongoing opportunity to share information on the progress the State is making towards improving RI Bridges and the way in which we deliver health and human services to Rhode Islanders. This submission shares data from January 15 - January 28, 2018.

Below, please find our monthly updates and attachments in addition to our standing bi-weekly submission points. The standard FNS data reports are not attached because, with FNS' permission, we have paused our submissions. When we resume submitting these reports we will include them in our bi-weekly submission.

Standing Bi-Weekly Updates and Attachments:

Correspondence with federal partners

Please see the following attachments:

- FNS submitted a letter to DHS on 1/16/18 approving additional funds to administer the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training Program in Federal Fiscal Year 2018.
- FNS submitted a letter to DHS on 1/22/18 regarding an orderly partial shutdown of operations for the Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service as of 1/19/18.
- FNS submitted a letter to DHS on 1/23/18 that FNS will conduct reviews of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program during the week of 3/26/18.
- FNS submitted a letter to DHS on 1/23/18 that the Food and Nutrition Service received funding on 1/22/18 so has resumed operations and is able to provide services to state agencies.

Number of off-cycle payments for the Child Care Assistance Program

- 527 off-cycle payments were made during this period,

Interim payments for Long Term Services and Supports

- 47 off-cycle payments were made during this period.

Monthly Updates and attachments

Update on staffing and training plans at the Department of Human Services

New Hires – Last week, the Center for Staff Development and Learning (CSDL) (formerly the Staff Development Unit) conducted a four-day new hire training for approximately 18 employees. The training topics included DHS organizational and program overview, department policies related to daily work practices, customer service, communication, civil rights related to voter registration, and basic RI Bridges navigation.

Current Staff – Since the last update, CSDL completed the first week of the medical training for all field staff members. In addition, a Customer Service Aide training was conducted for seasonal and permanent staff on scanning, indexing, and application registration. Also, six quarterly meetings were held during the month of December for all staff. During these meetings, SNAP policy on the areas of verification and expedited SNAP were enhanced. Furthermore, training was conducted for all field staff on resiliency. This specialized training focused the DHS staff on healing and moving forward from the challenges and changes experienced during the previous year.

Changes in State personnel involved with the project

Our goal at EOHHS is to bring all our resources to bear to achieve our shared goals – holding Deloitte accountable and getting an eligibility system that works for Rhode Islanders. The RI Bridges project team, as part of the EOHHS governance structure, continues to be managed by Ben Shaffer, EOHHS Chief Operating Officer. Ben is coordinating day-to-day project activities, and work with IT, DHS, Medicaid and HSRI leadership to prioritize program requirements. Also on the EOHHS project support team are Matt Stark for finance, Rose Jones for public affairs, and Lisa Martinelli for legal, as reported in our last submission. Ben continues to report to a Project Steering Committee – consisting of leadership from EOHHS, DHS, HSRI, Medicaid, DOA, OMB and the Governor's Office

Overall system improvements and focus areas

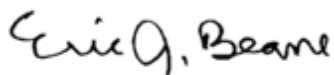
On January 20, the State and Deloitte implemented a maintenance fix with over 100 individual problem tickets to be addressed. Key areas of business needs addressed by this release include reducing discrepancies between RI Bridges and MMIS, improving accuracy of Medicaid terminations, improvements in performance to reduce the amount of time it takes to run monthly processes like post eligibility verification in Medicaid, reducing the number of errors a worker may see when processing a SNAP or Rhode Island Works case, and changing a system process called Mass Update that was making it difficult for LTSS workers to process eligibility on backlogged cases. During this time period, the state and Deloitte also began design on larger changes projected to come in the spring to enhance the system. These include system changes to improve the accuracy of addresses in the system, SNAP processing, workforce participation rates in Rhode Island Works, and functionality required by CMS.

Attached Reports

Daily Health Reports

Thank you for allowing us to provide details related to the State's RI Bridges improvement efforts. If you, or the Committee, have any further questions regarding the project, or any other matter, please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly.

Sincerely,



Eric J. Beane
Secretary
Executive Office of Health and Human Services

CC: Honorable Members of House Committee on Oversight